
THE ULTIMATE DRAGON WARRIORS ZINE

CASKET OF FAYS

ISSUE THREE





Slay bells ring, are you listening?
In the dark, snow is glistening
A terrible sight, we're fearful tonight
He's stalking in a winter wonderland

With those festive words from Wayne Imlach, it falls upon me to welcome you to the season of good cheer and excessive consumption in this, the issue of

'Casket of Fays' that will come to be known as 'The One That Came Out At Christmas'.

A bumper number of presents in this issue, but I'm afraid you'll have to gift-wrap them yourselves. The Most Learned Scribe, Shaun Hatelly, has drawn us maps. I think they're pretty darn lovely. We also see an interpretation of one of my favourite tables from the Corgi books, courtesy of David M. Donachie.

Happy festivities to one and all. See you in Spring 2021 with issue 4.

Simon Barns

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Illustrations: '*Naughty or Nice Santa*' by Wayne Imlach and Pixabay (cover); '*The Barbegazi*' and '*Winter Knight*' by Brockprint; '*The Ram Ring*' by Nigel Ward; '*Moon Maiden*' by tentacles_of_gloom ; '*Falling Damage*' by David M. Donachie; '*Newtling*' by Andrew Wright; '*Snowscape*' and '*Crookdimple*' by Patrick Crusiau; '*Balwimple Manor*', '*Mistress Marta's School*', and '*Watchtower*' by Shaun Hately; '*Sieppajaa*' by Carlos Castilho (back cover).

The Barbegazi

Brock

The Barbegazi are shy creatures that inhabit the mountainous heights of eastern Chaubrette, the County of Braeburg, and northern Kurland. They prefer to avoid contact with men; few have seen them and accounts of their appearance vary according to the storyteller.

Barbegazi are believed to look a little like dwarfs, with a shock of white hair and long white beards. They differ from dwarfs in having white fur all over their bodies and limbs, and having disproportionately large feet. They are said to sometimes wear simple tunics, braies and heavy belts, but always go barefoot.



The term 'Barbegazi' comes from old Chaubrettan for 'frozen beard', a name derived from the Barbegazi making their homes in the frozen mountain tops. They travel across the mountain snowfields using their huge feet as snowshoes or skis. In summer, they retire to caves and tunnels where they aestivate; spending their time in a dormant state until the weather turns cold again.

They have been known to be helpful to humans; rounding up lost sheep, digging trapped people out of snowdrifts, and warning of approaching avalanches. Barbegazi love to 'ride' an avalanche as it thunders downhill, giving a low whistling cry to warn others of the avalanches' approach. Locals will recognise this warning; others may not be so lucky.

Barbegazi do not like to fight and are able to call up a snowstorm to help their escape. Once a day, they can call a snowstorm to engulf the area they are in, dropping the temperature to well below freezing and reducing visibility to barely more than 5 metres. The snowstorm approaches rapidly, striking within 1d6 Combat Rounds, covering an area about 30m across, with a duration limited by a Spell Expiry Roll. When the snowstorm abates, any tracks and many features in the landscape will have been obliterated by a thick covering of snow. Although the snowstorm only has its full effect in the 30m area, snow will also have fallen (albeit less thickly) to a distance of 100m in each direction, making tracking the Barbegazi difficult and, possibly, causing the attackers to lose themselves in the mountains.

Despite their kindness, they are very private creatures. Try to follow one back to its home and they may use their snowstorm to befuddle and lead the pursuer to an unfortunate fall.

The Barbegazi occasionally keep some treasure in their homes; trinkets and other lost items they find in the dangerous mountain passes.

Attack 12	Health Points 1d6+6
Defence 6	Shortsword (d8, 3)
Magical Defence 5	Sling (d6, 3)
Evasion 5	Movement 12m (25m skiing)
Stealth 20	Rank Equivalent 1st
Perception 11 (Normal)	

Treasure: 1-3 none, 4-5 meagre, 6 poor.



Competition Results

This issue showcases a new potion, the winner of a competition held on Facebook. Stella Meacham won this with her 'Hilarious Potion of Pain Easing'. Find our second interpretation of Baron Aldred, courtesy of Derren Flood, in issue 4, due out in Spring 2021.

A Ghost of a Chance

Damian May

"The old manor, up on that hill, well, it's haunted. My grand-da, he used to tell me that behind them shuttered windows and that crumbling stone, well, the walls and floor are soaked in blood. He did say that the screams of the damned echo there. I'll tell you, I wouldn't go up, not even if you paid me a pretty penny" – an elderly villager.

A goblin, Crookdimple, has taken up residence in the crumbling edifice, Balwimple Manor, that lies up on the hill. This has stirred up the restless spirits that dwell there. As a fay being, Crookdimple is immune to the ghosts' Fright Attacks and finds their efforts to unseat her rather amusing.

The restless dead have become so desperate that some have begun to range beyond the manor walls, and frighten people on the road. This activity has led to the companions being asked to assist.

Crookdimple lurks in the attic, defending her meagre hoard scavenged from the house (45 florins worth of jewellery and a Ring of Obedient Parts that she hasn't been able to get working).

She will plead for her life and only attack if the party tries to rob her. If Crookdimple is killed or evicted, the ghosts will settle again and not bother anyone outside the manor walls.

1. Entrance – A reinforced oak door hangs open.
2. Entry Foyer – Faded tapestries and dusty rugs.
3. Dining Hall – Long oak table and benches. Dusty platters.
4. Kitchen – Cold stove, cold hearth, empty drawers.
5. Larder – Bottles of old wine, mouse-eaten foods...
- 6,7 and 8. Bedrooms – Mildewed beds and rotting clothes.
9. Main Bedroom – Rotted bed and broken furniture.
10. Nursery – Broken crib, mildewed clothes, and toys
11. Servant's Quarters – Collapsed cots and dust
12. Attic – A nest has been built here from old clothes and wicker-work.

Ghostly Encounters in the Manor. Roll 1d20 each time the characters enter a room.	
1	Ghost of Sir Reddick. Headless lumbering torso. (d12 Fright Attack)
2	Infant Daughter. Toddles around the room laughing to herself. (d10 Fright Attack)
3	A patter of small footsteps...nothing more.
4	A dark shadowy hound with fiery eyes. It growls then vanishes..
5	Bailick the Seneschal. Moans about the intruder in the attic. (d8 Fright Attack).
6	Lady Merisae. White dress, complains about the beast above. (d6 Fright Attack)
7	Blood runs down the walls...
8	A snatch of music on the air...
9	Whispering voices
10	The shadows move, deepen, then fade...
11	Rats. Not ghosts, just rats...
12	A dead pigeon...very dead.
13	Felcraff, once the house sorcerer, but now an insane Wraith (<i>Bestiary</i> , p.87)
14	Cackling Laughter that fades quickly...
15	Creaking Timbers.
16	Scuttling noise around the edge of the room.
17	Sudden heavy thud...
18	A loud scream.
19	Small object flies across the room.
20	Crookdimple, scuttling about the place. She shrieks when she sees the companions and flees to the attic.



Potion of Hilarious Pain Easing

Stella Meacham

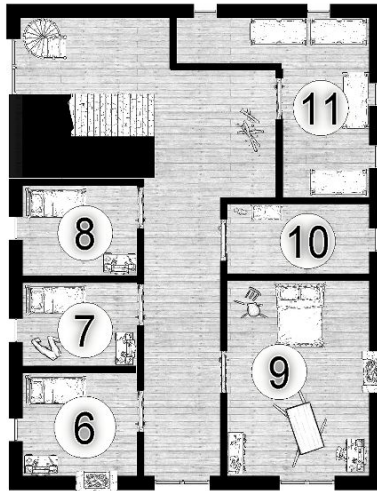
"When the stupid boy had finished what he was doing, he came to me....gah! It was the wrong colour of liquid! In my displeasure I may have menaced him somewhat, scaring the half-wit. With the jar pressed to his chest he dodged out of my way, it was agitated, a gas rose out.

He was wreathed in it and I took a step or two back to observe. Naught happened for a short space of time, then he began to chuckle, giggle and then laugh. Well, that was quite the outrage to my sensibilities so I slapped him. This seemed to have no effect at all, so I hit him harder, again no effect, normally he would have cried out...it was most unusual."

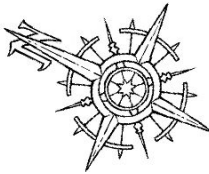
Causes an hour of spontaneous laughter, during which the target is able to endure small amputations, tooth extractions, and general beatings with less pain and more humour.



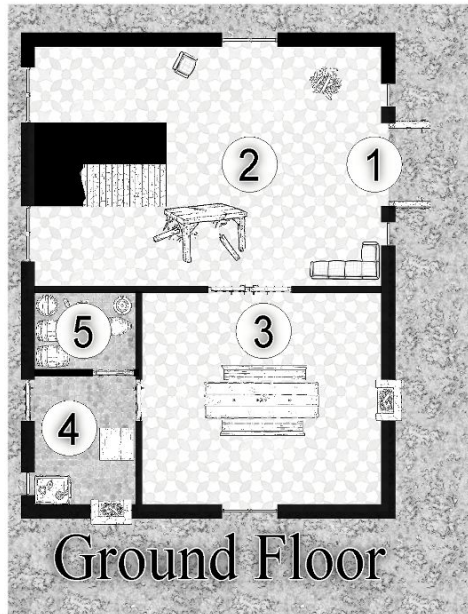
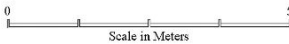
Attic



First Floor



Balwimple Manor



Ground Floor

Entry from the Journal of Usopi Venia

Ults

It has been less than a week since our departure from Glissom City, spurred on as we were by the abduction of the city's King and the supposedly eternal flame the locals believe wards off ancient and evil gods. Although I know Gatanades protects his servants, even I have felt a chill fear seeping into my bones since the Hawks of Nem made off with their prizes. In such a state we set out for the Lost City with Prince Doron, though the two bannermen ordered by the Steward to accompany us did not appear before our departure.

First, we made our way to the market town of Rosmuillean, where we paused only long enough for Caith and Aphail to be married. It was a fine ceremony and a much-needed boost to our collective morale. From there we made our way through the Siren Woods, and though the fae beings within were strange, they were no more harrowing than other encounters I have had since leaving Lakestead. Perhaps I shall commit a more detailed account once we are returned to the city.

Once through the wood, we arrived at a small settlement of, as Colm described them, 'simple folk'. Our arrival was well-timed, for though the villagers did not seem concerned at their situation, we discovered them in the process of being tortured by an armored warrior imbued with fell magics and served by the Steward's missing bannermen, though the two brothers seemed to be unwitting slaves to the warrior's spells.

From the village, we made for the caves that marked the farthest distance yet traveled by Colm. This system of caves was filled with all manner of danger, and it was unclear if the chambers within served as prison, lair, or temple. A legion of corpses known colloquially as Bronze Chests, though Giles and Brannon called them Selentines, littered the cavernous rooms, victims of the traps, spirits, pitfalls, and creatures within. We encountered a great worm who demanded tribute in exchange for passage, we later discovered the larder of what must have been a giant; stocked as it was with bear, deer, and human kills, we climbed through narrow fissures and avoided vast icefalls, and although we made it through the cavern system, eventually reaching the top of the Bracks' Mountain Range, we left many chambers unexplored and trials untested.

For a moment, standing atop the mountains that had last entertained human eyes in Gatanades knows how long, I felt a moment of peace. Despite the frozen corpses of another two Bronze Chests that stood as sentinels against the gusting wind, the view of the valley and lake far below was something to be remembered. Still, the feeling was short lived. In the distance, we caught our first glimpse of the Lost City, a cyclopean black granite structure jutting from the ice.

With a deer carcass absconded from the giant's larder, we descended the side of the mountain and finally reached the valley floor below. Here we stumbled upon the burial mound of the last legionnaire who perished in service to the commander, Felix Drajanus, as Giles named him. It was at this mound where we encountered the ghostly manifestation of Drajanus, who gave us warnings of what we might find once we set out across the frozen lake and enter Nem. His account suggested many perils that lay ahead of us.

Léofwyn used her powers over nature to craft us the shelter we reside in now, eating the thawed flesh of the giant's deer and steeling ourselves for the journey that still lays ahead of us. I pray that Gatanades will lead us through the dreaded city and allow us to return to Glissom with King and Hearthflame in hand. However, the teachings of his word are evidence enough that not all victories come without sacrifice. It is not beyond my imagining that many or all of us might be called to such extremes, though I take heart in the knowledge that the Lord will not allow such losses to be in vain.

(From the Glissom : Dark Heritage Campaign)

Bäreshirt – A Skill of the Mighty

Jonas Esser

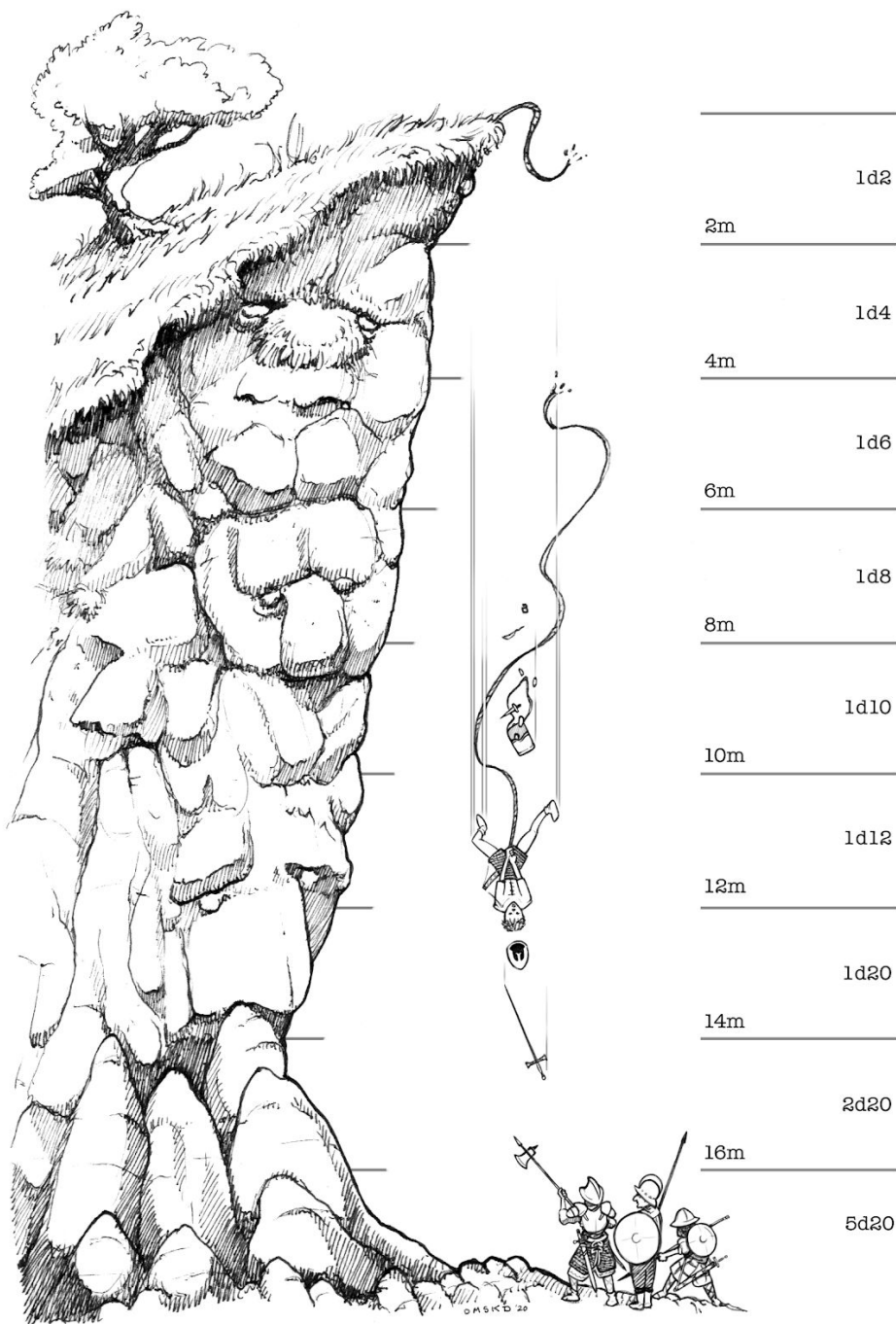
Some barbarians adopt a fighting style, based on free movement. Relieving themselves from the weight and bulk of armour, they are able to reach their full potential, moving with strength, swiftness and grace. Fighting unarmoured is risky however, and it takes only a few missteps to end up dead, when you have no armour to rely on.

When a character trained in Bäreshirt is fighting with armour lighter than ringmail, they gain the following bonuses in melee.

Hard leather armour:	+1 Attack +1 Defense +1 Evasion
Soft leather armour:	+2 Attack +2 Defense +1 Evasion
No armour:	+3 Attack +2 Defense +2 Evasion

Follow the discussion on this at:

<http://forum.libraryofhiabuoer.net/viewtopic.php?f=4&t=610>

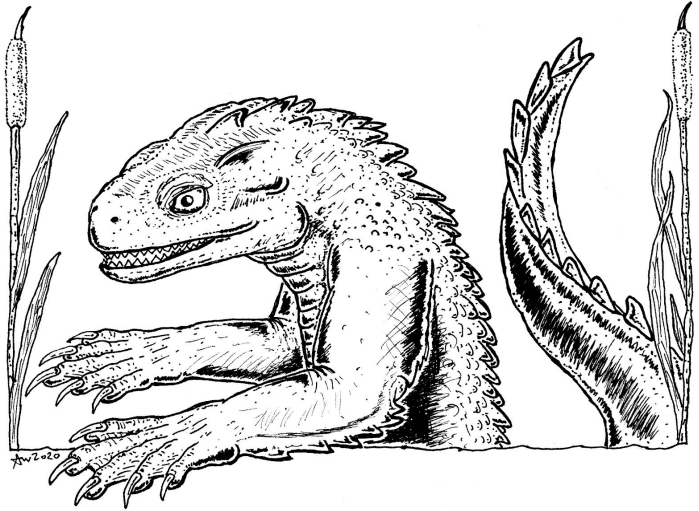


New Old Monsters – The Newtling

Andrew Wright

The lands of Legend are wide and vast, and much lore has been published about them and their many diverse denizens. But, occasionally, in the footnotes and asides, we find small fragments concerning obscure creatures otherwise ignored. Here's another one!

Deep in the reedy depths of the Trackless Ooze lurk the loathsome Newtlings, weird amphibious things with vaguely humanoid features, that grow to the size of a large dog. They have a long-limbed upper body, whilst below the waist they have a flattened, powerful tail that enables them to swim through the



mud and water of the Ooze. Newtling heads are wide and batrachian, with a vaguely comical expression and mottled brown in color like the rest of their bodies. To allow the creature to suck in their diet of river-weed, their rubbery lips are continually parted as they swim (or thrash) along. Newtlings are not entirely defenseless, as their paws contain sharp retractile claws.

Attitudes to Newtlings vary. The barbarians, who live in stilted reed-huts along the inland waterways that cobweb the Trackless Ooze, call these creatures 'Mud Thrashers' and hunt them mercilessly for their tender flesh and leathery hide (with which they craft clothing). Some southern scholars of Selentium, however, sent to investigate weird things on the fringes of the Empire, have recognized that Newtlings are intelligent and communicate in a language of burbled murmurings that can be interpreted with the aid of sorcery. Furthermore, in a landmark dissection, the sage Erasmus of Tamor demonstrated that Newtling skeletal and muscular anatomy is similar to that of the Swamp Folk of Albion and Western Legend's fens and bogs.

Roughly one in ten Newtlings are a golden-yellow in colour, and imbued with magical power that it can use once per day. Roll 1d6 on the table below to determine what this power is.

- 1. Rain (*Dragon Warriors*, p.101)
- 2. Create Bog (*Dragon Warriors*, p.96)
- 3. Roots (*Dragon Warriors*, p.96)
- 4. Suspended Animation (*Dragon Warriors*, p.90)
- 5. Raise Fog (*Dragon Warriors*, p.88)
- 6. Camouflage (*Dragon Warriors*, p.107)

These special creatures are venerated as 'Swamp-Talkers' by their fellows, and considered to be intermediaries between the Newtlings and the Cold Mother, a primordial deity who governs all who live within the wetlands. Newtlings will fight to the death to defend a Swamp-Talker, as many would-be-hunters have found to their cost...

<i>Attack</i> 10	<i>Health Points</i> 1d6+2
<i>Defence</i> 4	<i>Claws</i> (1d4,4)
<i>Magical Defence</i> 3	<i>Movement</i> 10m (15m)
<i>Evasion</i> 4	<i>Swimming</i> 15m
<i>Stealth</i> 16	<i>Rank Equivalent</i> 1st
<i>Perception</i> 6 (Normal)	

Note: The Newtling originally appeared in the *Dragon Warriors* rulebook (pp. 157-8). For a non-canon alternative, the Marshlings, from *Golden Dragon Book 6*, 'The Castle of Lost Souls', are similar.

Mistress Marta's School

Shaun Hately

Mistress Marta (*Friends or Foes*, p.38) started running a small dame school in Ongus about fifteen years ago. Her pupils came from diverse backgrounds – mostly from the children of merchants in the surrounding community, but with more than a few children from more privileged, even noble, backgrounds, and even more poor children and orphans who she took on as charity cases. These good works seem to have attracted some sponsorship and patronage from the wealthy – nobody seems entirely sure who – which has allowed her to buy a large warehouse in the Southgate ward of the city and convert it to a larger school. The location seemed perfect to the new owner – although she would have reconsidered if she had known that the 'church' across the road is, in fact, the headquarters of the Crooked Rooks, the closest thing Ongus has to a 'guild of thieves'.

What few know is that Mistress Marta has an ulterior motive behind her school – albeit one she sees as benevolent. Marta is a powerful sorceress, a retired adventurer, who saw the Magical Academies of the south and works towards a day when her school might stand openly among those. For now, she works in secret, taking those pupils who she sees as having the most potential and training them as apprentices. But her school truly is a place of learning for all its pupils, whether they have that potential or not.

This new school building is one of the oldest surviving buildings in the area, having survived a fire that ravaged much of what surrounded it – a long, narrow, former series of warehouses reconstructed internally as a purpose built school. On the ground floor there are six classrooms – simple rooms with benches and tables for the pupils, and a desk for the teacher – a cloak room, a sick room, an excellent library (probably one of the finest in Ongus), Mistress Marta's own study, and a kitchen and refectory where students are fed an excellent luncheon each day – there is food enough for a child to survive even if they are not being fed elsewhere. Behind a simple door, there is a staircase to an attic that the Mistress has converted to her own private apartment, although before somebody can enter that domain they must pass through a small chapel dedicated to the True Faith. Mistress Marta gives every impression of being a devoted and devout believer which may be why her school has avoided problems with the Church – while her abilities and intentions with regards to sorcery are not generally known, they are an open secret among the powerful of Ongus and this requires special care in not forcing a response from Church authorities. This caution is also the reason why Mistress Marta keeps the most obvious signs of her talents – her private rooms devoted to her adventuring past and the study of her art – in part of the attic hidden behind a secret door off her bedchamber.

There is a cellar below the kitchen where foodstuffs are stored, and a well and outbuilding in a fenced yard behind the school – this outbuilding contains separate privies for boys and girls, and a private bathroom used by the Mistress herself.

The fees for the school are set at a penny per day per child, or one florin every two weeks (school runs for five and a half days each week), or a crown each month (those who can afford to pay by the month are charged more to help cover the costs of the poor) but many pupils attend for nothing – Mistress Marta has persuaded a significant number of wealthy patrons to support her mission. For these fees students receive teaching in reading, writing, and mathematics, as well as some broader subjects – the Mistress takes ancient and foreign languages very seriously – as well as one good meal a day. Many parents – particularly those who can supply foodstuffs through their trade – are encouraged to pay in kind, rather than in cash. The six classes are taught by six of the senior pupils of the school who have reached the stage that they are both pupils and teachers – children are assigned to a class based on ability, rather than age alone. Discipline is strict, even severe, although no more so than any other school in the city, and Mistress Marta's pupils will reluctantly acknowledge that their Mistress cares deeply for their welfare, even while still smarting under the effects of her birch.

Appendix N – Gretel & Hansel (2020)

Tim Knight

Food from Flesh (Darkness Elementalist spell – level 2)

This wicked spell converts chunks of recently killed human flesh into edible food, reshaping it as roasted meats, pies, and vegetables. Even more horrifically, it only works with meat harvested from prepubescent children – every four Health Points sacrificed creates enough food to feed four people for one day.

Any follower of the True Faith (or other good belief) who finds they have consumed this food must roll under or equal to their Psychic Talent. If they fail this roll, the GM may roll on the Madness Tables (*Dragon Warriors*, p.124) to see what effect this has on the hapless eater's sanity.

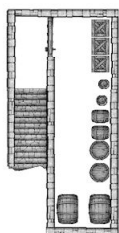
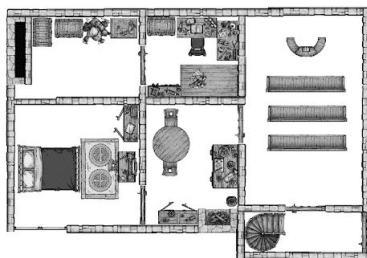
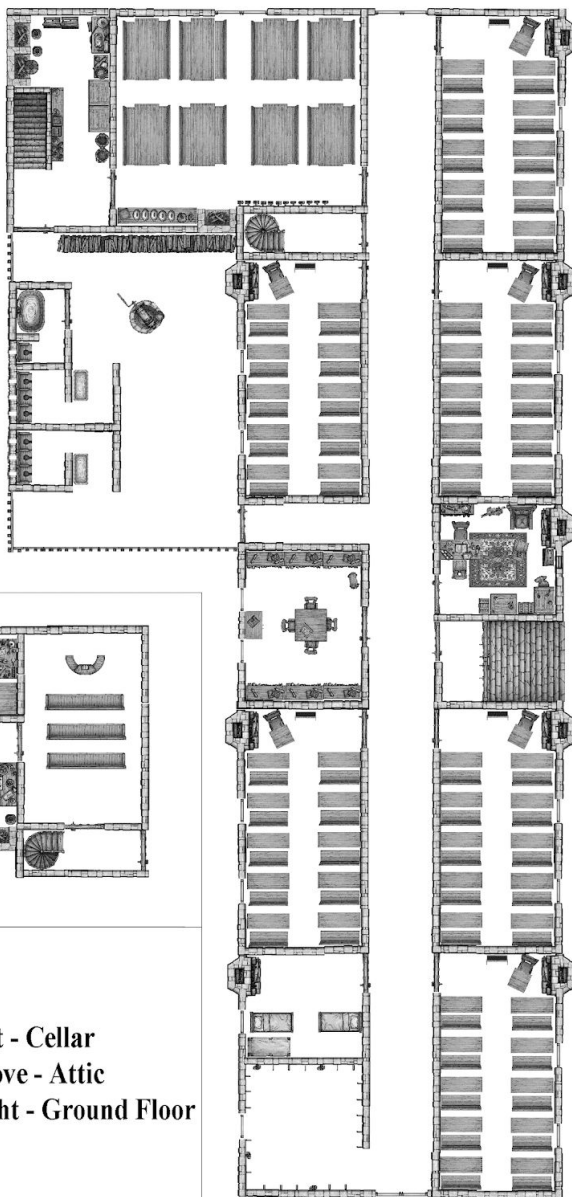
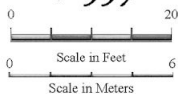
The souls of anyone eaten in this manner are unable to move on, and linger in a state of Limbo. They can only find peace when the person who cast this spell is, themselves, slain.

The original version of this spell, and a review of the film that inspired it, is linked below. Tapping into similar vibes as both Hagazussa and, to a lesser degree, The VVitch, Gretel & Hansel is a languid, lyrical, art house rural horror yarn that most definitely won't appeal to everyone.

[HeroPress: Gretel & Hansel \(2020\) \(heropresstwo.blogspot.com\)](http://heropresstwo.blogspot.com)

Mistress Marta's School

(Ongus,
Albion,
cAS997)



Left - Cellar
Above - Attic
Right - Ground Floor

<http://www.libraryofhiabuor.net/MistressMartasSchool.html>

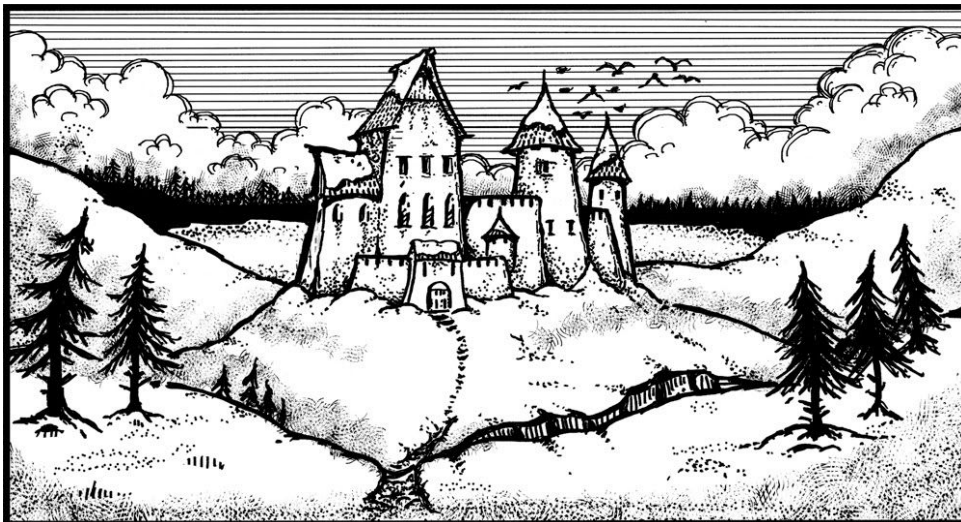
Spell Failures

Christian Hagg

This alternative rule is offered for GMs who feel that the existing 'random spell' result of miscasting doesn't fit their campaign. This rule focuses on the consequences of magical energies becoming uncontrolled, where no spell has been formed.

The unfortunate spellcaster rolls 1d10, adding their rank, and subtracting the level of the spell. Check the result on the table below for the effect.

Result	Effect
13+	The spell succeeds but costs an additional Magic Point.
10-12	The spell succeeds, but the magic burns the caster, causing them 2 points of damage.
6-9	The spell fails and magic burns out of control, causing the caster 1d4 points of damage.
4-5	The miscast spell draws the attention of a mischievous, otherworldly being, who attempts to lay a hex on the caster. The GM rolls a Magical Attack equal to 20 plus the spell level against the caster's Magical Defence. If the attack succeeds, the caster is cursed (as per the Sorcerer spell). The curse lasts for one day for every level of the miscast spell, or until otherwise lifted.
3	The spell fails and a dark mist rises from the ground, forming into otherworldly tentacles which attack the caster. The tentacles have a Speed of 14; if the caster fails to evade they are held firm (unable to take any action) for 1d4+1 rounds and suffer 1 point of damage per round as the tentacles drain their life force.
2	The spell fails and magical energy explodes outward from the caster, causing 1d2 points of damage per level of the spell to all creatures and objects within a 6 metre radius. Characters who evade the effect's Speed of 14 suffer half damage. Armour Factor can be subtracted from the damage caused to all, except the caster. Additionally, all creatures who fail to evade must roll under their Rank on 1d8 or be stunned for one round. More than one careless Sorcerer has destroyed their laboratory in this way.
1	The spell fails as arcane energies run unchecked through the caster's body, causing their body to blister, melt, freeze, or atrophy. The caster is subjected to a Magical Attack of 20 plus the level of the spell. If they fail, they suffer 1d4 points of damage per level of the miscast spell and suffer a permanent injury (as per the Permanent Injuries Table, <i>Dragon Warriors</i> , p.208). Those who successfully defend against the effect endure only 1 point of damage per level of the miscast spell and do not suffer a permanent injury.



One Knight's Crusade

James Healey

GM BRIEF – Adventure for four to six 1st rank characters

The players are recruited by Sir Gunthar, a vassal Knight of Baron Grisaille. Recently returned from the Crusades, he found his family dead or scattered. His sole surviving relative and nephew Will, having been corrupted by a mysterious Barbarian, had joined this band of brigands who had usurped the family lands.

The real story is that he returned to find his brother, Donal, dead and his nephew, Will, in charge. As Gunthar tried to take control, Will sent him packing. Gunthar assembled a band of cut-throats and took the lands, installing his cousin, Bardan, as a puppet ruler. Known now as 'The Hunter', Will escaped, gathering together a group of disaffected farmers/villagers, and aided by a childhood friend, Oleg, took over a watchtower on the Albion and Thuland border, setting pit traps to hamper any attacks (REF 12, 2m drop with spikes at the bottom (2d3,4)).

Player Information

The players find Sir Gunthar in a local inn. He seeks aid to reclaim a tower that brigands use as a base to rob travellers and merchants. The brigands are led by The Hunter. Gunthar will pay eight crowns to the characters if they can take the watchtower, and bring The Hunter to justice.

NPCs

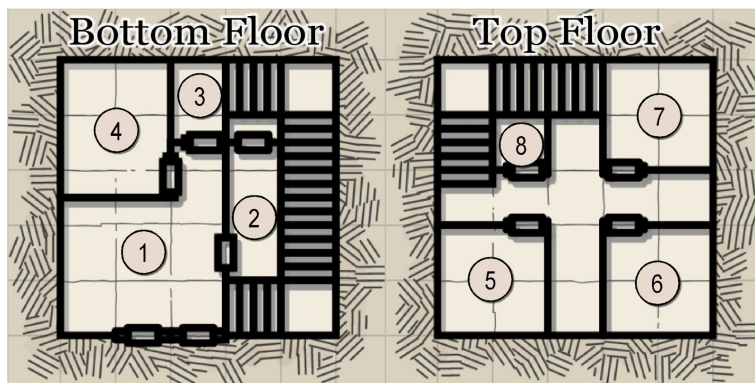
Sir Gunthar – 3rd rank Knight – Str 8 Ref 17 Int 11 Psy 9 Lks 7 – Att 15 Def 11 MD 5 Eva 6 Ste 14 Per 5 AF 5 HP 13 Sword (d8,4), Bow (d6,4), Shield, Potion of Healing and 12 crowns. Skills – Track, Ride Warhorse

Will – 3rd rank Hunter – Str 11 Ref 16 Int 12 Psy 5 Lks 15 – Att 16 Def 9 MD 3 Eva 7 Ste 19 Per 9 AF 3 HP 11 Bow (d6+1,3) Shortsword (d8,3) Skills – Track, Bowyer/Fletcher, Precise Shot, Favoured Weapon (Bow), Favoured Terrain (Hills), Set Traps, Forage, Stillness, False Trails

Oleg – 3rd rank Barbarian – Str 16 Ref 8 Int 6 Psy 12 Lks 9 – Att 18 Def 8 MD 5 Eva 4 Ste 13 Per 5 AF 4 HP 15 Battleaxe (d8+1,7) Mace (d6+1,5) Skills – Track, Ride Warhorse, Berserk

10 Brigands – 1st Rank Humans – Ref 11 – Att 11 Def 5 MD 3 Eva 3 Ste 12 Per 4 AF 2 HP 7 Bow (d6,4) Staff (d6,3)

The Tower (Each block is 1 Square Metre)



1. Entrance – Acts as a stable and meeting chamber.
2. Armoury – 50% chance of common weapons being found here. A small room at the back contains two suits of ringmail and a +1 Dagger (d4+1, 4).
3. Privy – A tunnel leads to the outside. Characters with Str 8 or less can crawl up this way.
4. Living Area – Kitchen and Larder. Contains chairs, tables, and a well.
- 5 - 7. Bedrooms – Rooms 5 and 6 belong to the brigands. Room 7 is used by Will and Oleg. There are arrow slits and murder holes in these rooms.
8. Stores – Stores food, barrels of water, oil and pickled fish, a brazier, and bundles of arrows. A trapdoor can be reached by ladder, leading to the roof, where a large stone brazier is filled with oily wood.

Frost Phantom

Wayne Imlach

Frost phantoms inhabit areas where corpses have been interred or left to rot, such as graveyards and battlefields. These invisible entities feed on the remnant life energy left after death. Under certain conditions freezing fog or mist crystallises around them, conferring form and shape. In this way empowered, they seek the life energy of the living. Their appearance echoes the dead on whose lingering energy they subsist, shimmering white spectres floating above the cold, frozen earth.

Attack 22

Defence 8

Magical Defence 12

Evasion 6

Stealth 20

Perception 18 (Panoptical)

Health Points 1d6+18

Touch (1d6 attribute points)

Movement 5m (10m)

Rank Equivalent 5th

Mundane weapons and fire will disrupt their shape temporarily, but they quickly reform, recovering 1d6 Health Points per round. If reduced to zero in this fashion they will retreat into the mist until fully restored. Magical sources deal permanent damage that cannot be recovered this way.

Having naught but crystalline rime giving them form, they cannot cause physical injury, instead leeching the life energy of the victim. Each successful attack drains 1d6 points from Strength or Reflexes (whichever is higher, choose randomly otherwise). Only magical armour or a successful parry with a magical shield can prevent this, reducing the life drained by its magical bonus. Should either attribute be reduced to zero, the character collapses, too weak to move. If either falls to -3 or less, the character dies.

A frost phantom will depart once it has drained 2d10 points of vitality from its victims. They can only exist in the fog, so finding shelter or clearing the mist via magical means can be used to defeat them. Lost attribute points are restored at the rate of 1 point of each attribute per day of rest.

The Ram Ring

Nigel Ward

An innocuous vellum sheet lies in a dusty corner of the Pontiff's library in Selentium, describing the siege of Alusia in 40AS. Perhaps deliberately hidden amongst the dry record of the Twelfth Legion's casualties, prisoners taken, and treasures pillaged, this recounts the first known recorded use of a unique, powerful magical ring.

The scribe drily recites the Twelfth Legion's campaign against the secessionist rebels of what is now northern Chaubrette. The legion had besieged the fortress village for thirty-nine days, without their sappers or siege engines making any appreciable progress towards breaching the impregnable fortress.

On the fortieth day, the legion's commander (Legatus Legionis) Magnus Vispasius Sulla called for a parley with the chieftain of the defenders. As a show of faith, Magnus agreed to meet in the shadows of the gatehouse, thirty paces from the great, iron-banded gates of the fortress. Magnus was only accompanied by two adjutants, and arrived bareheaded and without his shield (scutum). The chieftain and his retinue sallied forth from a small postern gate to stand defiantly before the commander.



After much posturing from the barbarians, Magnus grew tired of the negotiations and told the chieftain that, without unconditional surrender by the count of three, he would knock the gates down, sack the fortress, put its defenders to the sword, and take any non-combatants as slaves. At this apparently idle threat, the chieftain muttered various choice insults, theatrically moved to stand with his back against the great gates, arms held wide, and invited the Selentine to take his best shot.

Magnus duly counted down and, on reaching one, pointed a large golden ring on his left hand at the gates. He intoned an unrecorded phrase and, mere seconds after, the gates smashed asunder with a tremendous crack. The legionaries surged forward at this pre-arranged signal, capturing the gate and, ultimately, subduing the entire fortress. The sight of their hapless chieftain crushed to pulp against the broken gates broke the morale of the occupying barbarians.

Magnus suffered two arrow wounds in the ensuing chaos, but was shielded from further injury by his adjutants as they fell behind the advancing legionaries. It is well known that the Twelfth Legion disappeared in the forests of Kurland just a few years after the siege of Alusia, but there are no reports of what became of Magnus Sulla

or this ring. No further mention of the ring is made in records of Sulla's Alusian campaign.

The Battering or Ram Ring is an ancient magical device of considerable power. Crafted from solid gold, this large ring resembles the head of a mountain goat, with onyx inlays in its eyes and mouth. This ring enables the wearer to summon a spectral battering ram in the shape of a log, 8m long, and 1m in diameter. A character with Psychic Talent of at least 9 will observe, when the ring is activated, that a translucent, shadowy image of a giant ram-headed battering ram appears. There are no visible wielders of the ram, but some observers have heard the clanking of chains as the ram has swung back and forth. It appears to be capped by an iron head whose shape is a larger version of the ram's head on the ring.

To activate the Ram Ring requires the wearer to point the ring towards its intended target, such as doors, gates, or other fortifications. The wearer must recite a phrase from ancient Bacchile, which arcane scholars have translated in a somewhat bemused fashion as approximating to "Heave Ho, Ker Chung". The ethereal ram appears approximately 20m from the wearer so its effective range is approximately 25-30m. Unlike most magical rings, the Ram Ring holds just 3 charges and then must be recharged. A Sorcerer of 8th rank or higher may recharge it, with the rituals and process taking one lunar month per charge.

The spectral ram strikes slowly, but with tremendous force, that will demolish stout doors, batter down castle gates, and smash half a metre into solid rock. Any unfortunate being who fails to evade it (Speed 8) will suffer 8d6 HP damage, and be knocked backwards a number of metres equivalent to 1d6+18 less their Strength.

Mortal Combat: Inspiring the Cunning Folk

Lee Barklam

For this article, I have been inspired by the Mortal Combat spellbook – not to write new spells for adventuring magicians, but to write about the weaker magics appropriate to the ritualistic practices of the Cunning Folk introduced in The Elven Crystals. Each of the rituals presented have come from the low-level spells of the Mortal Combat spellbook.

The Cunning Folk are petty magicians that practise the Cunning Art. More common in the northern realms of Ereworn and Glissom, Cunning Folk may be found anywhere traditional ways of life are still practised. They are not (yet) a player profession, so this article is deliberately rules light, focusing instead on the narrative potential of Cunning Folk in your games rather than the mechanical integration of their abilities into the Dragon Warriors RPG.

The Cunning Art is a branch of ritualistic magic adapted to simple protections, divinations, and utilitarian applications – it is not invoked through hurried incantations and gestures, like the dazzling spells of adventuring magicians (who must often call upon their powers in a hurry), but as chants and rituals. The magical effects of the Cunning Art last only as long as the ritual is being conducted, and the Cunning One is unable to perform any other action until it is complete.

Augury

Divines a simple horoscope to determine favourable times and omens. The ritual takes at least 20 minutes to perform and is often accompanied by a divinatory ritual, such as the casting of chicken bones or runes. The results of this ritual are almost always vague and open to broad lateral interpretation.

Aura of Danger

Analyses the aura of an object or place to determine if it is dangerous to the Cunning One. If present, it will also reveal the presence of good or evil intentions.

Aura rituals take at least 20 minutes to perform and cannot be used on the living. Typically, aura rituals are like those for Augury but may include additional elements like incense burning, especially when using aura rituals on places rather than items.

Aura of Magic

As Aura of Danger but determines specifically whether the item or place is enchanted (or otherwise subject to supernatural influences) and a rough indication of the strength of that enchantment.

Dowsing

The Cunning One must choose something for which to dows, typically water, direction of north, magical taint, etc. The Cunning One may continue this ritual for as long as they wish, walking slowly in the direction they feel drawn until the ritual indicates they are within 6m of the source. This ritual cannot locate a living person or creature and will require a dowsing rod, pendulum, or similar item.

Produce Flame

Produces a small hovering flame (about the size of a candle flame and shedding the same amount of light) that will move with the Cunning One for as long as they maintain the chant.

Since the last article for the Casket inspired by the Mortal Combat RPG, Mortal Combat is now available as a reward on Dave Morris' website:

<https://fabledlands.blogspot.com/2020/12/mortal-engines.html>

Trollwares – Hag's Locks

Wayne Imlach

This roughly knotted net is woven from the long dark tresses of a Mere-hag. Once it entangles a target, the fibrous cords twist and contract, gradually immobilising the victim.

It can be thrown up to 5m, using normal missile combat rules. It is wide enough to entangle a man-sized being, but ineffective against larger foes.

Once snared, if the victim keeps quite still, the net remains inert. Any movement causes the net to constrict – at the end of each combat round, reduce the victim's Attack and Defence by 2 points each, and their Evasion by 1 point. This penalty accumulates each round the victim moves, or struggles.

As their action for the round, a character may attempt to untangle themselves from the net. They must roll equal to or under their Reflexes OR Intelligence (whichever is higher) on 2d20. However, pulling at the net makes it constrict faster, so if the roll is a failure the character takes double the prescribed loss to Attack, Defence, and Evasion.

If Evasion drops to zero, the target is immobilised. Continued struggling will force the breath from the victim, and they will pass out in 1d6 rounds.

The still net will gradually loosen over the course of several minutes, and may be carefully removed. Dispel Magic cast on the net will cause it to immediately loosen. It may also be cut away in 2d4 rounds, though this destroys the net.

A dry net is vulnerable to fire or extreme cold. However these methods of destruction would leave those caught in the net somewhat worse for wear.

As one might expect, such a weapon is typically found in the use of the Mere-hag that created it.

Moon Maiden

Damian May

These hellish beings are otherworldly horrors, called down by worshippers of the ancient lunar demon, detailed in Hunter's Moon (*Sleeping Gods*) and The Torc of the Moon (*DW Wiki*). They are unnatural beings, constantly flickering in and out of focus when called to the earthly realm.

They resemble young women carved from ivory, with black pits for eyes and onyx serpents where their arms should be. Their mouths are fanged and a constant stream of rancid blood runs from their eyes, ears, nostrils, and lips. A constant scream like a woman in agony accompanies them at all times, seemingly emitting from the air around the creature, only ceasing with the demon's death.

These beings are affected by Relics in much the same way as Hellions (*Bestiary*, p.70).



Attack 18
Defence 9
Magical Defence 10
Evasion 12
Stealth 4
Perception 32 (Panoptical)

Health Points 2d10+6
Snakes (two attacks, may attack separate targets) (d6,6)
Movement 10m (20m)
Rank Equivalent 6th

Online Resources

DW Facebook – www.facebook.com/groups/2321315414820351

The Great Library of Hiabuor – www.libraryofhiabuor.net

The Cobwebbed Forest – www.cobwebbedforest.co.uk

Wimlach's Blog – wimlach.weebly.com/dragon-warriors.html

DW Discord Server – <https://discord.gg/eX4qehk>

Dave Morris' Patreon – www.patreon.com/jewelspider

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